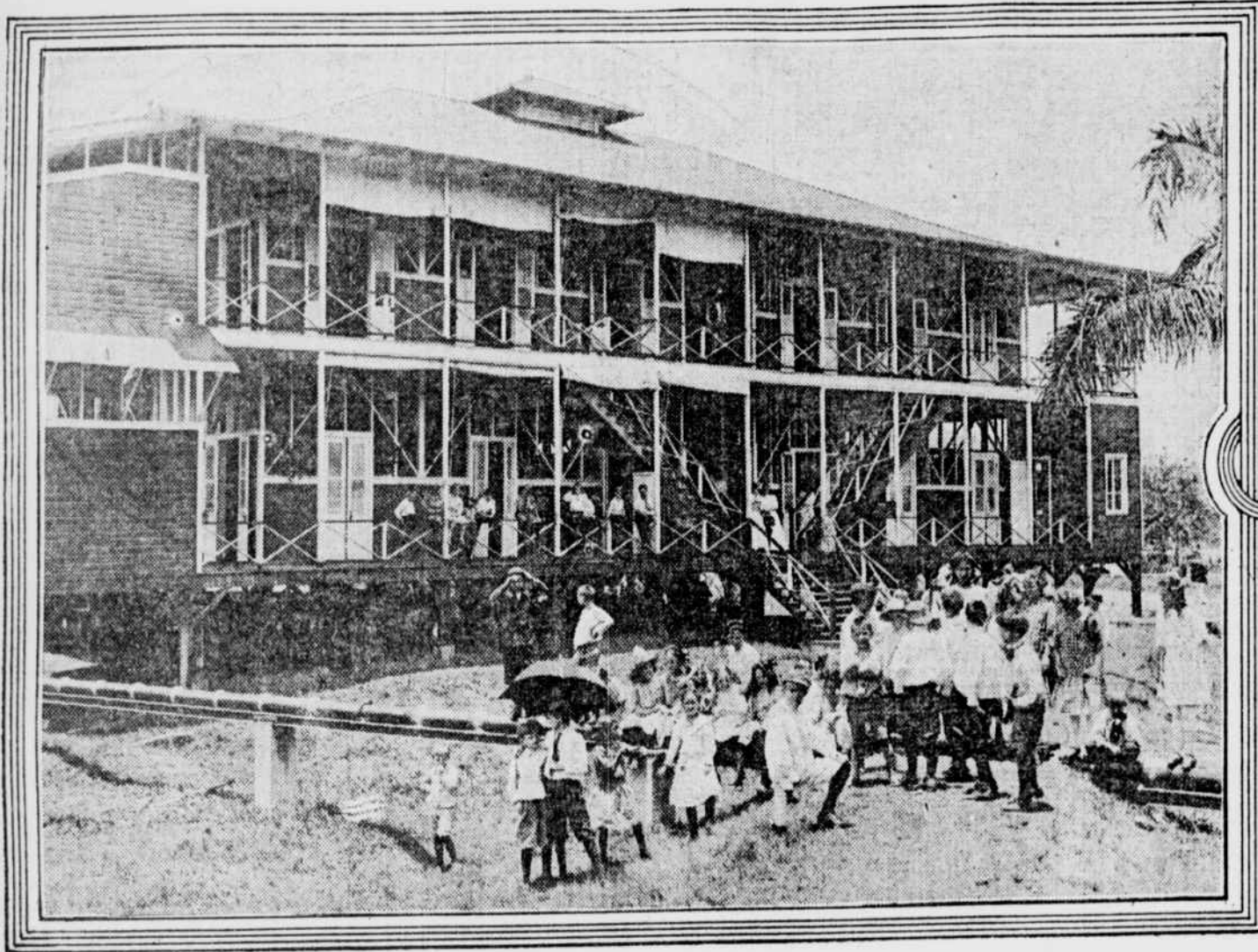
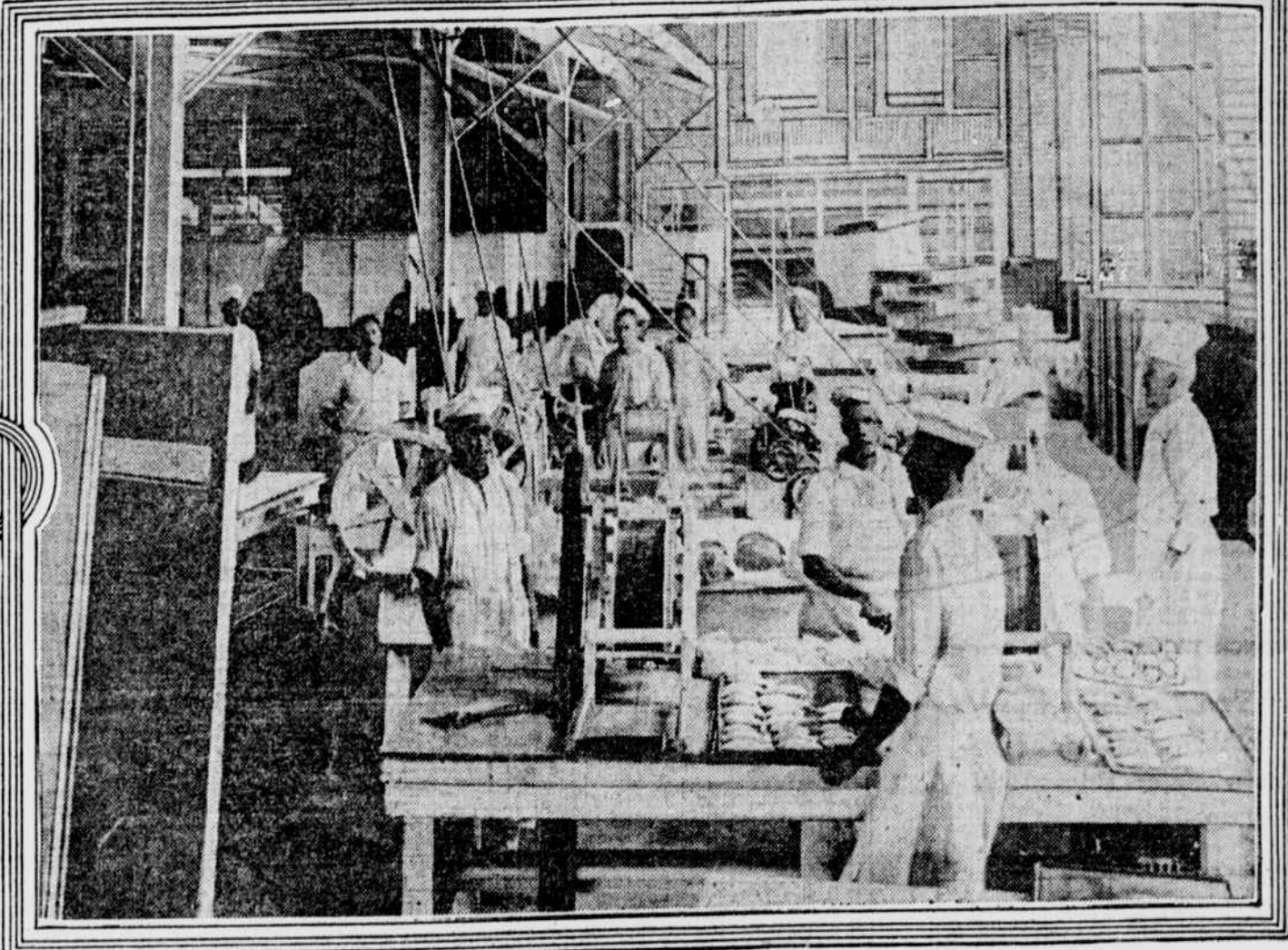


Uncle Sam's Frantic Signals Brought Woman to the Rescue in Canal Zone



SCHOOL AND CHILDREN AT PLAY, EMPIRE, C. Z.



INTERIOR OF BAKERY WHICH SUPPLIES 35,000 EMPLOYEES IN CANAL ZONE.

Feminine Contingent at Panama Was in State of Chaos and Dissatisfaction Until President Taft Induced Miss Helen Varick Boswell to Organize Social and Club Life on Isthmus.

WHEN most of us think of the Panama Canal we do not think of women. It has never seemed the logical thing that we should. Steam shovels and men, mosquitoes and mud and muscle and men—these come to mind naturally. Just as naturally as women come to mind when you think of Easter or hear from afar the sound of broken window panes.

There being a time and place for everything, would seem, you say to yourself, to eliminate from serious consideration the suggestion that any one woman has played a most important part in the construction of the Panama Canal.

President Taft does not feel this way about it. He had to call on a woman to save the situation from what looked mightily like disaster. Furthermore, the President of the United States called on this woman by telegraph, and when she begged off, he called again. Then she rallied to the appeal of her country and saved the day.

This woman was Miss Helen Varick Boswell. She comes of Revolutionary ancestors, for one thing; she understands women for another. Perhaps the first circumstance has something to do with the fact that Miss Helen Varick Boswell is a fighter.

She was born in Baltimore, but came to New York City in her early girlhood. Why? For the purpose, apparently, of identifying herself with the progressive movements of the metropolis. Anyway, she did join these movements soon afterward. She earned her LL. B. degree that she might utilize her legal training in her public work.

SHE UNDERSTANDS WOMEN.

That she understands women and that the government of the United States did not was proved by Miss Boswell when she came.

But that is what this story tells fully. There is no reason for omitting at the outset, however, that, in addition to being prominent in Daughters of the American Revolution work, Miss Boswell is president of the Forum Club, of New York City; chairman of the committee on industrial conditions and child labor of the New York State Federation of Women's Clubs; a brilliant and witty speaker, snappy, kindly, broad minded and, to sum it all up, a "good mixer."

Why did the President of the United States urge Miss Boswell to go to Panama? Listen. There was an interesting development down there.

The government had fixed things so there was nothing for the women at Panama to do except be perfectly happy. The women at Panama found that a thoughtful government had smoothed all the difficulties from their paths.

The situation was becoming acute. Members of the National Civic Federation came back to the states from a visit to Panama full of enthusiasm for what was being done, but having noted a state of unrest.

Women found houses finished, furnished, modern, perfect in every detail. Among the women were representatives of every sort of condition in a pioneer atmosphere, without the troubles and hardships which ordinarily well together such elements under such conditions. Worse still, the women having everything attended to for them by a paternal government were bored to death—and decided signs of homesickness were developing all along the line.

The canal authorities felt trouble was brewing. If they wanted to keep the men at their posts something must be done to make the women content. Men were asking for leave of absence, and the women's homesickness was fast developing to that stage that nothing but a visit "home" could cure.

"Why don't you do something for the women? You've done everything possible for the men," was suggested to President Taft.

Mr. Taft grasped at the suggestion and wired Helen Varick Boswell, asking, "Will you go to Panama?" Miss Boswell, immersed in some of her many engagements and interests, wired back substantially: "Sorry, but too busy."

"For pity's sake go down, find out what's the matter and do something to make the women stay," the President implored.

FOUR MONTHS OF PERSUASION.

This was in June, and it took until October for her to become convinced that Mr. Taft would not take no for an answer. The result of the animated correspondence was that Mr. Taft sent Miss Boswell to the isthmus to inquire into the situation and make suggestions. Colonel Goethals was instructed to put into effect any suggestions she made which seemed practicable.

Now, the problem was this: In the beginning the conditions on the isthmus were frightful. Sewerage was unknown, like-wise drainage of any kind. The poisonous surface water was the only kind known. Mosquitoes were a mysterious infliction from the good God, and the illness and death following their visitation were, of course, never thought of as necessary consequences.

To-day to be bitten by a mosquito in Panama is a rarer occurrence than to be bitten by a mad dog in New Jersey. Miss

Boswell remembers one mosquito biting her, and reported the fact to Colonel Goethals. The filth in the streets of the old Spanish towns surpasses any idea not gained by actual experience in like circumstances. Miss Boswell says: "I always carried a bottle of smelling salts in my walks—not that I was afraid of fainting, but to get an occasional respite from the dreadful odors."

At first the men lived in tents. But with the backing of Uncle Sam's might and millions a marvelous transformation took place. Dirt and disease were routed. The most modern sanitation in all ways became an accomplished fact. Every house in Uncle Sam's domain owned a tile and cement bathroom, with shower baths, and the authorities saw to it that they were used. Ancient Hospital was built, unexcelled in beauty and equipment by any in the world. The largest, best equipped bakery in the world sprang into being. The government distilled all the drinking water, and in the Canal Zone the sanitary drinking cup was in common use before it was thought of in the States.

The government supplied houses, fuel, light and drinking water without cost to its employees. Nothing came out of their pay but food and clothes, and that pay is from 40 to 75 per cent more than is paid for the same work in the States. This was, of course, to induce the men they wanted to go to Panama, as it was regarded as an almost impossible proposition.

One of the results of this combination of circumstances is that hundreds of thousands of dollars came up to savings banks here, and when the work is finished the men who have built it will almost every one have a nice little sum to invest in a home or a business.

WOMEN BEGIN TO ARRIVE.

When work was begun on the canal the men who rushed there in thousands were of the adventurous type. As the work advanced and conditions became more conventional and stable a need arose for companionship and homes. It was forcibly impressed on the authorities that as soon as the isthmus emerged from its first state of chaos, turbulence and lawlessness it was up to the government to make it possible for men to bring their wives down. The "married quarters" were built, and the men who had wives sent for them, and most of the others came up to the "state" and persuaded their sweethearts that matrimony was one grand sweet song at Panama. You will note the plot thickens.

Now when men forego their social distinctions drop out of sight, as a rule. The government had erected clubhouses, put them in charge of the Young Men's Christian Association, and the men all used them amicably. But—do you begin to see the need for Miss Boswell's appearance?—with the advent of the women social lines began to be drawn and sets and cliques developed in the Canal Zone. The army set and the civilians in their different strata did not hit it off.

Without any preconceived notions of what ought to be done, Miss Boswell arrived at Panama. The first things that she discovered were magnificent clubhouses, one in each of the American towns on the isthmus, and they were standing idle and empty all day long, for the men used them only at night. Not many persons realize that there are eight large American towns in the Canal Zone.

Colon is where the steamer lands, the old Spanish town on the Atlantic side. Cristobal is the "first American town"; then Gatun (where the big docks are); Gorgona, where the machine shops are; Empire, where the clerical force is massed; Culebra, where the members of the commission have their headquarters; Paraiso, Pedro, Miguel and Ancon, over on the Pacific side. There, too, is the Hotel Tivoli, built by the government and on a par with the biggest and best summer hotels in the United States for comfort and cuisine.

AN ENGINE ALL HER OWN.

When it came to getting about from place to place the two passenger trains a day were found most inadequate, and Colonel Goethals authorized Miss Boswell to commandeer an engineer and his engine when she wanted to get anywhere, and for two months she went up and down the isthmus, looking into the trouble and making up her mind as to the remedy.

"I certainly did qualify as a member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers," said Miss Boswell laughing. "I must have travelled hundreds of miles."

When Miss Boswell had surveyed and sized up the situation she applied the remedy—and a surprised and pained set of men it was when "lovely woman" refused to fill that particular part assigned to her.

All Miss Boswell did was to size up the situation—call on the women to organize



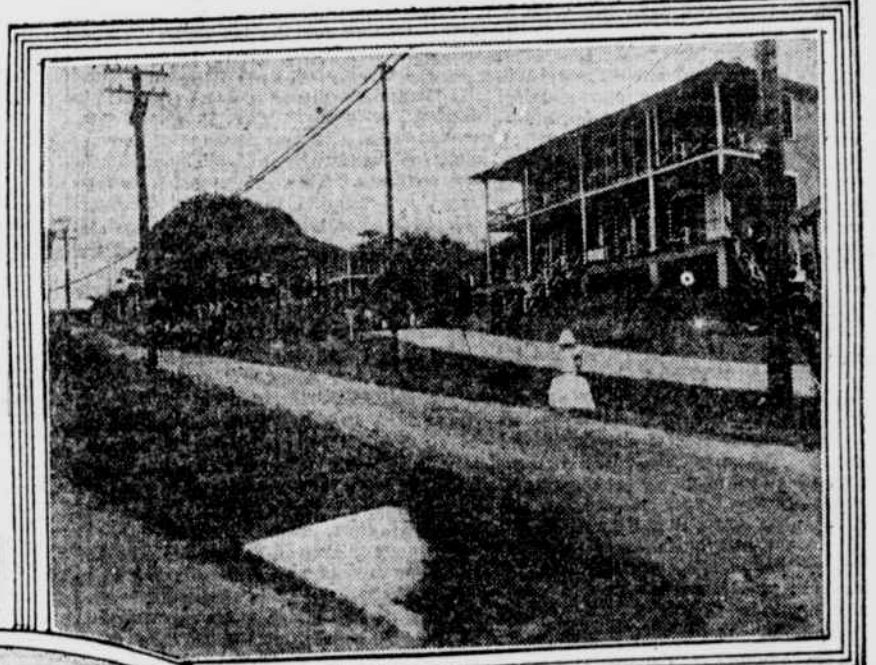
Miss Helen Varick Boswell.

New York Civic Worker Found That Women, Life Being Made Too Easy for Them, Were Flocking Away and Taking Men with Them; So She Proceeded to Create New Interests for Them.

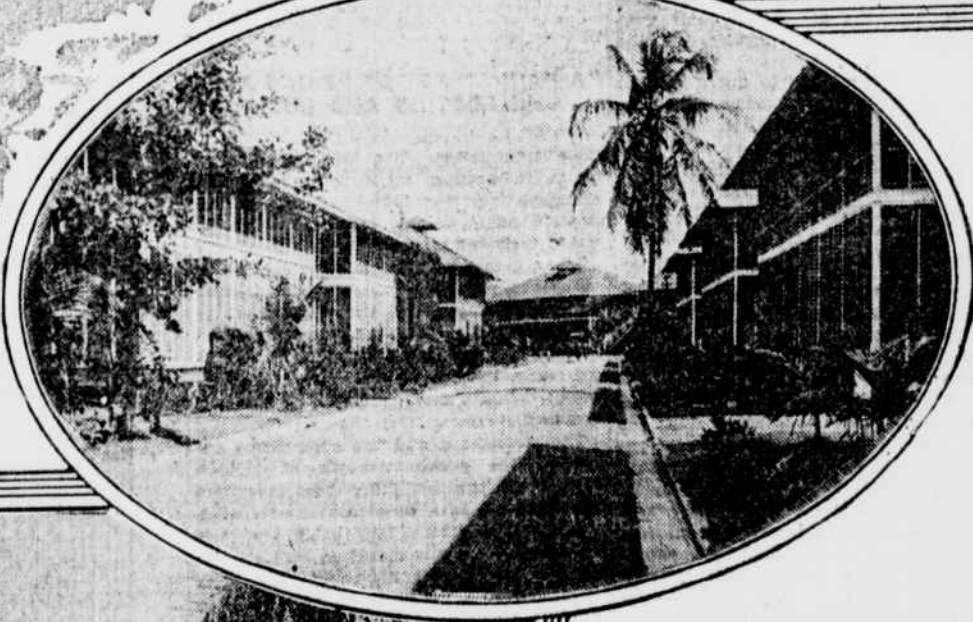
Invited to use it for their meeting. Her suggestion was hailed with acclamation and the federation met in the room, which was elaborately decorated with flags for their use, and bade farewell to the "Mother of the Canal Zone Federation."

When President Taft visited the isthmus he commended most warmly the work done by the women. They have taken charge of the running of the schools. When twelve hundred organized women demanded graded schools they got them. All the women had known that reading matter was

of useless units into an organization busy and helpful—and consequently happy. Miss Boswell doesn't look formidable. As she talked of her work in Panama it did seem rather an astounding thing to discover such humor, force and clearness of vision in a little lady clad in blue negligee, with a duck of a cap on her pretty hair. But this little woman helped Uncle Sam at a critical moment when she dug the women out of a slough of despond and utilized the force that was going to waste, turning it into a powerful influence for



HOSPITAL, BANDSTAND AND SCHOOL AT GORGONA, C. Z.



"FAMILY QUARTERS" IN CRISTOBAL, C. Z.

almost non-existent on the isthmus. After they organized they went to work to remedy that situation, with the result that all the clubhouses have good libraries.

The great bakery turns out seven thousand loaves of bread and three thousand rolls every day. The women suggested inclosing each bread unit in a white envelope as it came from the oven.

When it becomes necessary that a patient should be taken to the hospital he must be carried on a stretcher and transported by train. These stretchers are of the simplest construction—four solid legs to rest upon, with frame and handles. The patient was exposed to flies and mosquitoes. The women suggested extending the supports that did duty as legs and adding simple canopies of mosquito netting. Adopted!

Playgrounds came into existence. One was particularly planned and fitted out near the old Spanish cathedral. When it was put in commission the notice was read in all the churches that the government had made a present of the playground to the Panamanians. The succeeding day mothers and children came in crowds, but they didn't know how to play! The Americans took their children down and gave an object lesson. Now the playgrounds are most enthusiastically patronized.

When Miss Boswell first arrived at the Canal Zone she went through the painful sensation of seeing her cherished lingerie beaten on stones in the waters of any handy stream. She suffered as did Mark Twain when he watched to see "how long it took to break a stone with his shirt front!"

At present the most modern and well equipped laundries handle the clothes of the people. Panamanians are employed in the laundry, and incidentally hundreds are thus learning a trade.

These are only a few instances of what the women have done since Helen Varick Boswell turned them from an unhappy lot

uplift and progress in every department of life in the Canal Zone.

It has been one of the dreams of Colonel Goethals and the men who are helping him to dig the Panama Canal, that some day, after the canal is finished and the people of the United States "discover" it, it will become one of the most famous and popular winter resorts of the world. To a large extent, the attractions of the Canal Zone are already drawing winter tourists. The list of those who have booked passage for Panama this winter contains many distinguished names.

The Canal Zone has not only become habitable—it has developed a social life of its own that has many of the best features of life in the United States; and when American tourists begin to flock to the isthmus they will find not an undeveloped jungle but a place with all the things that make life worth living in any of our communities, down to the Young Men's Christian Association and the women's clubs.

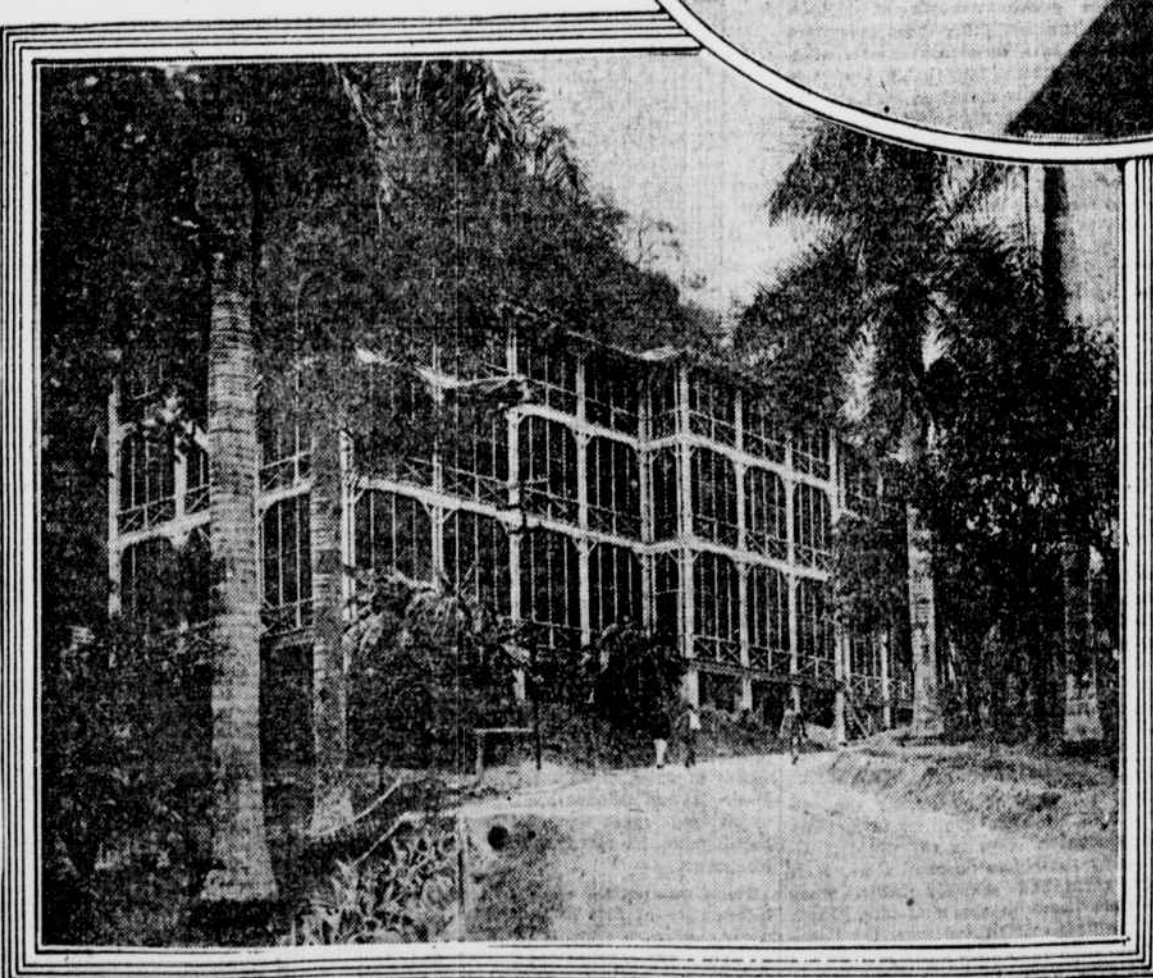
What Helen Varick Boswell accomplished seems to me to be worthy of being compared to what the engineers did when they dug up and put into commission the abandoned machinery of France—and she certainly is to be thanked for the help she has lent to metamorphose Panama from a pest hole into a near-Paradise.

THE GREAT STEADIER.

John D. Rockefeller, Jr., impressing on his Bible class the steady influence of a good wife, smiled and said: "A minister once asked a young man on a train: 'Do you smoke, sir?' 'No, sir,' was the reply. 'I suppose you drink—that is to say, moderately?' 'No, sir, I abstain,' answered the young man. 'Do you gamble?' 'No, sir.' 'Swear?' 'No, sir.' 'Young man,' said the minister, with an air of once pleased and puzzled—'young man, what are you, anyway?' 'I'm married,' the young man answered."

THE CENSOR.

"Eugene Walter is making a great hit in London with his strong drama, 'The East-End Way,'" said a manager. "I dined with Walter at the Cafe Royal last month. He talked a lot about the English censor. 'He gave me a good illustration of the grandmotherly way the censor treats a play. He said a playwright had this passage in a love scene: 'Then, dearest Mabel, we will meet to-night at 10 in the old lane, by the ruined mill. There should be lovely moonlight.' 'The censor ran his blue pencil through this paragraph, and requested in the margin that it be changed to: 'Then, Miss Mabel, we will meet in the garden this afternoon at 4—provided, of course, your mother can be present. The weather promises to be cloudless.'"



BACHELOR OFFICERS' QUARTERS, PANAMA.

and sit in the game again. Ennui fled and excitement reigned; for the first time in months the women were busy talking over the situation and expressing their views.

Clubs were organized in every town to meet in the idle clubhouses, until then used only by the men.

It was the old story of "The Colonel's Lady, Judy O'Grady." Those who really cared for music were drawn into the affiliation of "musical mornings." Civics, literature, etc., did the work of sorting out from

the mass those whose tastes and interests harmonized.

The different denominations had worshipped in union chapels—all but the Catholics, who found churches of Spanish days waiting for them. Now almost every denomination has its own church. Even the American Catholics have built their own house of prayer and have English speaking priests. Many of the most distinguished Protestant clergy occupy the pulpits of the different denominations. After the various

clubs were formed Miss Boswell organized the Canal Zone Federation of Women's Clubs, and then they joined the general federation, and will be well represented by delegates when that body holds its biennial convention in San Francisco next summer.

In the Hotel Tivoli is a magnificent salon which is known as the President's Room and only used when the President or his representative is in Panama. Just before leaving for home Miss Boswell suggested that the Canal Zone Federation should be